

**REMARKS**

The Office action of December 21, 2005 has been carefully considered and the application has been amended accordingly.

Claims 8-16 are present in the application.

Claims 8-11 have been allowed. Claim 14 is now written out in independent form and is allowable (in paragraph 8 of the Office action, "Claim 13" should read "Claim 14.") Claims 12, 13, 15 and 16 have been rejected.

In paragraph 2 of the Office action, with regard to the rejection of claim 16 under 35 U.S.C. 112, the Examiner's attention is directed to Applicants' specification which describes the possibility of the pig going up the other tube at two places, namely, page 3 lines 4-9 and at page 7 lines 4-12. It is therefore unrealistic to interpret "up the other tube" as if it reads "up the first tube"! This claim makes it quite clear that the pig goes down one tube and up the other tube, which is completely different to the mode of operation in the Morgan citation.

As regards the substantive objections, a fundamental part of the Examiner's argument is that the citation Morgan (US 3,991,825) provides a pig 36 which is "impermeable via the valve 38" (the valve is actually 88). This is a very odd use of the word "impermeable" - the examiner is asserting that Morgan's pig is impermeable despite the fact that in Morgan's device it is essential that liquid passes freely in the upward direction through the pig (by virtue of the passage 38). In contrast, the present invention uses a pig which has no channel or valve.

Applicants are willing to insert, into the description, a sentence to the effect that: "In this specification the word impermeable as applied to a pig means that liquid cannot pass in either direction through the pig." This, however, appears to be redundant but could be inserted by Examiner's Amendment or a Supplementary Amendment at the Examiner's request.

Claims 15 and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Morgan (US 3,991,825). Applicants respectfully submit that this is clearly not true, as in these claims an essential feature is that both tubes are of the same diameter so that the pig can go down one and then up the other. That is not possible in the citation. A further clear distinction is that the pig of the present invention is impermeable, whereas the pig of the citation is required to allow liquid to pass through it, so it is clearly not impermeable.

Claims 12 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Morgan. In parent claim 12 there are three clear distinctions:

1) in the present invention the pig is impermeable, whereas in Morgan the pig is required to allow liquid to pass through it;

2) in the present invention the pig is moved down to a resting position which is below the valve, whereas in Morgan the resting position is above a valve;

3) the present invention uses flexible tubes.

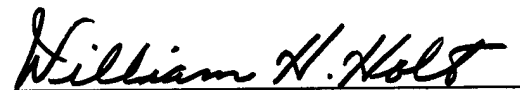
As regards claim 13, the Examiner has misrepresented Morgan. Morgan provides no means for reducing the pressure below atmospheric pressure, and at its lowest the pressure in the line 50 would be that of the atmosphere (with the valve 56 open as shown in FIG.1, if the valve is left open for sufficiently long). The Examiner's comment that opening the exhaust valve 56 "will result in a momentary vacuum being pulled on the system" is not accurate. If the exhaust valve 56 is opened, air will flow out of the valve 56 because the line 50 is at above atmospheric pressure; and air will continue to flow out until the pressure in the line 50 drops to atmospheric pressure. At that point the air flow will stop. In any event, the claim requires that the pressure at the top end of the first tube must be decreased to below atmospheric pressure, and this can never happen with Morgan's system.

The foregoing amendments correct a couple of typos and present clarifications to avoid further misunderstandings; Applicants submit, however, that no new issues are presented, and it is believed that the amendments should be accepted as placing the application in condition for allowance of claims 12, 13, 15 and 16, along with claims 8-11 and 14. Such action by the Examiner is courteously solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

March 21, 2006

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Filing Date: 02/20/2004  
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